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Against the Tide: An Intellectual History of Free Trade, by Douglas A. Irwin

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satisfactory results. A study limited to Erasmus, Acontius, Chillingworth, and Bodin (as variant on the main theme) would have allowed a more leisurely pace of discussion. The works of these four writers offer ample material illustrating Remer's central thesis, which is sustainable in itself and makes a respectable contribution to our understanding of Renaissance humanism.

ERIKA RUMMEL

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KAREN GREEN. *The Woman of Reason: Feminism, Humanism and Political Thought*. New York: Continuum. 1995. Pp. 211. \$24.95.

At a time when no scholar would deny the plurality of traditions influencing contemporary feminist theorizing, few of us would include humanism within our list. From the perspectives of Marxism, radical feminism, and poststructuralism, humanism appears hopelessly mired in false assumptions concerning the existence of a common human nature and shared human faculties, reason and perception in particular, which provide a basis for developing truth claims.

Karen Green's excellent study of the historical links between feminism and humanism promises to change this perception of humanism and its value for feminist political theory. Indeed, Green argues that the unique promise of feminist humanism is to be found in its solution to current tensions between essentialist and social constructivist accounts of human nature. But the humanism that Green proposes to reclaim is a humanism most often articulated by women, a humanism that she argues emerges from a "distinctively feminine concept of the rational individual" and "begins with the observation that humans are sexual beings, who are born helpless, and its theory of justice aims, in the light of these facts, for the good of both women and men" (pp. 10, 6).

Green precedes her study of feminist humanism with a dense overview of recent critiques of humanism arising from the Marxist and poststructuralist traditions. Although some may find her renderings of complex theorists such as Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and Luce Irigaray frustratingly abbreviated, she accurately identifies central tenets underlying these multifaceted critiques and provides possible avenues within feminist humanism for resolving or dissolving the tensions they raise. Undermining those who would equate humanism with a universal, generic human nature and its concomitant rationality, Green locates the promise of humanism in difference via the specificity of women's thought. She provides a genealogy of feminist rationality within the writings of historical feminists who posit a model of rationality that is "much more embodied and more closely tied to the emotions than that characteristic of male philosophical texts" (p. 23).

Green pairs comparisons of feminist with non-feminist humanists in an effort to trace the impact of humanism on feminism and feminism on humanism.

Contrasting Christine de Pisan to Thomas Hobbes, Green shows that current equations of liberalism with social contract theory are inaccurate by revealing how de Pisan's liberalism contains an early example of a non-contractual society in which those in power are morally responsible for the moral and material well-being of those with less power. Jean-Jacques Rousseau is paired with Mary Wollstonecraft to demonstrate that what Green labels "feminine" humanism, which postulates the existence of basic moral sentiments connected with innate tendencies to love, is not sufficient for an adequate feminism. Vindicating Wollstonecraft from the typical feminist critique of her as an egalitarian rationalist who embraced a masculine rationalism as a universal human norm, Green argues that Wollstonecraft espoused "a conception of human reason in which the capacity for imagination, and its consequent stimulation of sympathetic fellow feeling, are central to human rationality and ethical development" (p. 103).

In her final chapters, Green turns to the interconnected themes of socialism and sexual relations, two issues that remain a problem for a humanism that postulates women's financial independence while not critiquing either the linking of economic reward and political power to success in the market or the continuation of women's traditional roles within the family. Here Green moves quickly through a sometimes confusing array of nineteenth and twentieth-century theorists, including Friedrich Engels, Sigmund Freud, William Reich, Foucault, Ronald Dworkin, Simone de Beauvoir, Irigaray, and Carol Gilligan, in an attempt to find resources for a feminist humanism capable of resolving such omissions. One has to make an effort to follow the convolutions of her lines of argument, but, in the end, it is worth the effort. Green makes an admirable case for a feminist reexamination of humanism.

NANCY TUANA

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DOUGLAS A. IRWIN. *Against the Tide: An Intellectual History of Free Trade*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1996. Pp. viii, 265. \$29.95.

This is a concise account of the emergence and survival of free trade as an economic principle. It is concerned only with theoretical argumentation, not with the making of commercial policy. As Douglas A. Irwin explains in his introduction, "the aim of this book is to describe how free trade came to occupy such a commanding position in economics and how [it] has maintained its intellectual strength as a doctrine despite the numerous arguments that have arisen against it over the past two centuries" (p. 3).

The book has two parts. Part one, "The Origins of the Free Trade Doctrine," traces thinking about foreign trade from antiquity to the eighteenth century, with emphasis on the emergence of mercantilism in the seventeenth century, the overturning of the mercantil-

ist orthodoxy by Adam Smith, and the subsequent establishment of a new free trade orthodoxy by the classical economists in the early nineteenth century. This is an oft-told story that Irwin recounts crisply but with little new insight. Indeed, part one serves mainly to set the stage for part two, which explores the various ways in which the free trade orthodoxy has been challenged over the past 150 years. This is the most original and valuable part of the book.

Irwin takes up the various challenges to free trade in rough chronological order, starting with Robert Torrens's argument in the 1820s that a tariff applied unilaterally could alter a country's terms of trade in such a way as to raise its total consumption of goods above what it could consume under free trade, an argument that Irwin judges to be still the "most robust" challenge to free trade and the "least subject to qualification or exception" within the body of accepted economic theory (p. 115). He then moves on to the infant industry argument for protection that is normally associated with Friedrich List but which Irwin sees as getting its first theoretical justification in John Stuart Mill's *Principles of Political Economy* (1848). Next Irwin examines Frank Graham's attempt to justify permanent protection of manufacturing as a way of shifting resources away from sectors with declining returns to scale to sectors with increasing returns to scale. From there, it is on to the "wage differential" argument for protection associated with the Romanian economist, Mihaïl Manoilescu, and the challenge to free trade presented by welfare economics. Irwin concludes with chapters on John Maynard Keynes's brief flirtation with tariff protection in the 1930s and the rise of strategic trade theory in the 1980s.

According to Irwin, these theoretical challenges to the principle of free trade have sometimes led to qualification of the blanket endorsement of free trade contained in classical economics. The terms of trade debate, for example, revealed that, in order to deliver its expected benefits, free trade has to be reciprocal (a country adhering to free trade unilaterally in a world of protectionists will suffer). As Irwin demonstrates, however, in most cases where criticism of free trade has appeared valid at first glance, further analysis has revealed flaws in the criticism and has reaffirmed the superiority of free trade, all the while clarifying the corollary policies that must accompany free trade. Thus Keynes's endorsement of tariff protection to combat high unemployment in Britain in the 1930s turned out to be a response to the British government's irrational devotion to the gold standard. When Britain went off gold, Keynes dropped his endorsement of protection. As if to confirm Keynes's judgment, subsequent theoretical work by Milton Friedman and others showed that, once fixed exchange rates are abandoned and a certain level of structural unemployment is accepted as normal, as happened after 1970, free trade reemerges as the preferred trade policy.

Historians will appreciate Irwin's cogent exposition of these important theoretical debates, but they will probably question his underlying assumptions about the way economics "works," and they will find his explanation of the rise and persistence of the free trade doctrine incomplete. Irwin tends to view economists as scientists who accept or reject economic ideas on the basis of their theoretical soundness, much as mathematicians prove or disprove theorems. Although Irwin readily concedes that much economic theory arises from the need to deal with new economic circumstances, he makes no allowance for the influence of ideology or aesthetic proclivities, the force of received wisdom, the politics of professional advancement, or the influence of social class and economic interest: in short, all the external influences on thought and ideas that historians customarily look for, especially in this post-Foucauldian age of "discourse deconstruction." So while the presentation of the theoretical argumentation on free trade in this book is welcome, in the eyes of most historians it will not be sufficient in itself to explain how and why free trade has gained or lost currency among economists over the years or indeed why free trade was "invented" in the first place. The search for such an explanation will no doubt continue.

MICHAEL S. SMITH
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MICHAEL DUREY. *Transatlantic Radicals and the Early American Republic*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas. 1997. Pp. xi, 425. \$45.00.

Countries such as Great Britain and the United States develop and function within many overlapping spheres simultaneously. In the United States, a Europe-facing perspective can coexist with the new western history, and in Britain, older interest in radicalism can cohabit with the attention given to popular conservatism. Thus, the concept of a North Atlantic democratic revolution remains a useful conceptual device, especially since political emigrants from Britain played a significant part in American politics during the 1790s. One of the many merits of Michael Durey's valuable book is that it extends analysis of transatlantic radicalism much more systematically than has been true in the past. It is, in essence, three studies in one: an analysis of radicalism in the British Isles during the 1790s, a sensitive discussion of the process of expatriation and adaptation to the circumstances of a second society, and a commentary on the party turbulence of late eighteenth-century America. Each section feeds on the other two, thus adding strength to the book's organizing principle.

Numerous scholars have explored the reception of radical British thought in the colonies before the American Revolution, but thereafter British historians have generally waved farewell to radicals as they left the country, and American historians have considered them primarily in their American context. Durey rem-